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THE JACG NEWSLETTER

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THE JERSEY ATARI COMPUTER GROUP

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Well, two months in a row I'm a happy editor. Everyone has been great in helping out this month, all making sure that their articles were in in plenty of time for me. I think this has been one of the easiest months of putting together the newsletter since I've been doing it. Keep it up, everyone!

By the way, in this column last month when I was mentioning former officers still onboard making our group strong, I inadvertently left out Gary Gorski, former president and now membership chairman/secretary. Now, Gary is one of those guys that does the tons of work that is not always high profile and doesn't always get noticed. Except for small problems recently in the message bases, Gary has masterfully run our BBS for a long time. He is an unobtrusive SysOp that lets the board run itself, something I appreciate as a user. He is also the one who was responsible until this month for printing up all the Z*Mags and getting them to the meeting for insertion in the newsletter. Lots of thanks are due to Gary for his work over the years.

Lastly, Dave Noyes has been known to dig at former presidents for their lack of participation in the group when their terms are up. I think it speaks strongly for the group right now that three former JACG presidents are still acting as various officers. That's dedication!!

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Z * NET SECTION



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NEXT MEETING:

FEBRUARY 9th, 1991

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GENERAL FEATURE

PRESIDENTIAL PONDERINGS II

by Joe Kennedy, President, JACG

HAPPY NEW YEAR!! As this is being written we are about to usher in 1991. My hope is that this will be a successful year for the JACG. In fact it's more than a hope. I'm sure that it will be successful if every member gave just a little bit to the club. So think about what you can do to help your club.

In looking back on 1990 I must plead absence for the biggest part of the year, so I can't give much of a recap, but I do know that the club ended the year in fairly good shape.

The rewards of doing things for the JACG are more than just an extra ticket in the drawing at the monthly meeting, you could gain international fame. If this intrigues you, then look for Neil's article elsewhere in this issue for details.

The chance for some technical/program minded member to gain further fame will come at the January meeting when David Cornell of the New Jersey Amateur Computer Group will be looking for someone to talk to his group about the ST machines. Dave's people would like to hear about the I/O capabilities, programmability, etc.

If you are interested in helping out and you didn't talk to Dave at the January meeting then feel free to give me a call at the number on the back and I'll put you in touch with Dave. And we'll even give an extra ticket in the drawing to the member who gives of his time to further the fame of the JACG.

To prove that things never change, Atari Germany is still claiming that Atari will be continuing to produce the 8-bit machines. How's that for being honest with the consumer? Sounds to me like Atari is just trying to sell out their stock in Europe during the

Christmas sales season. Doesn't that make you want to trust the people from Atari even more? Imagine what the sales of Atari computers would have been if they weren't such good, truly user friendly machines!

To the comments earlier about helping the club, we do need someone to be in charge of the setting up and removal of the equipment. The officers are normally involved with other club duties and cannot be expected to also dismantle and store the equipment. If you would like to help with this, please contact me.

To those 8-bit users who can't find any new software for their machines, I would suggest that you look into European sources. PAGE6/ATARI USER has a large amount of software advertised. With the latest ABBUC disk magazine I received a catalog of 8-bit software with 18 to 20 pages (of course this was in German and as such not for every user). The point here is your machine is still one of the best home computers available and there are new areas to explore. You just need to put a little effort into it. ST users should know that there is also quite a bit of new ST software coming from Europe too.

That's about it for this month. See you at the meeting. As usual if you have any questions, complaints, PRAISES, or whatever you can also contact me on the JACG BBS (number on the last page), Genie (J.KENNEDY31), or at the telephone number on the back page. 'Til next month happy computing!

J
Give A Bit!
C
G

8 - BIT FEATURE

8 - BIT VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT
by Dave Arlington, 8-bit VP

Well, as with many of the other officers and club members, December is not usually the best month to get a lot done. There was the holiday season, of course, plus my final exams. But the fact you're reading this indicates I got something done!

If you didn't make it to the meeting this month, you missed demos of Star Fleet I (but don't worry, we have a strategy feature on this game in this newsletter for you!), a demo of an English Soccer program that drives home Joe's point above that good 8-bit software can be found overseas, and possibly demos of some new PD stuff.

So what's new on the PD scene other than the fact I haven't got those great programs from last month into Sam's hands yet? (I told you I was busy!) Well, I didn't have a lot of time, but I spotted on GENie lots of new MicroIllustrator pics, including some Donald Wildmon would not approve of, a whole disk full of Star Trek (the old series) digitized sound effects and speech samples, a new first person perspective 3-D maze game, a new set of floating point functions for Action! from Mat*Rat himself, and a utility to turn Micro Illustrator pictures in GIF format to display on other types of computers. Whew! And that was a slow month for new 8-bit PD stuff! Don't swallow the party line that there is no new 8-bit software!

And now time to dip into the ol' mail bag:

Hello Mr. Arlington;

My name is Ed Salvesen, one of the newest members of the JACG (Dec. 8th). As you are the present 8-bit VP as well as editor, I chose to address my questions to you. I hope you don't mind.

Let me preface my questions with a little background. Originally, I bought Atari because of price. Later, after seeing a great deal of problems with

Commodore despite their having a surprisingly large share of retail software shelves, I decided to stay with Atari. There's absolutely no doubt that Atari is a better computer, 'K' for 'K'. What injured Atari, from my point of view, was the public's desire for escapism, which was never fully satisfied by low 'K' programs. This led to the decline of 400s and Vic-20s. Software manufacturers were in a special quandry with regard to the Atari 800s. With 48K up against 64K elsewhere, they couldn't afford to alienate 800 owners so they often made a less entertaining version of a program for Atari, even after the 64Ks came out. (I still can't find a good Mini-Putt like Accolade's for the C-64!)

Now, with ANALOG and Antic apparently 'deep to left', the user group may be the last bastion of Atari enthusiasts. I certainly wish to partake in the exchange of ideas and procedures to keep Atari from becoming extinct. Presently, I do not own a modem, but I am going to get one soon.

Now for my questions:

- 1) What are the primary subjects for demos? (I own mostly commercial games.)
- 2) Is it kosher to make copies of PD disks I purchased from distributors?
- 3) Is there a catalog of JACG library disks that I may obtain?
- 4) Do I need an assembler/editor to program in machine language?

I didn't want to take up valuable meeting time asking what might be redundant questions. I hope you'll bear with me. Enclosed please find SASE. Please drop me a line if you have the time.

Thanks and Happy Holidays,
Ed

REPLY: Well, since the purpose of

a users group is to share information, I usually don't find any questions to be redundant. The old saying goes something like "The only bad question is the one that isn't asked."

As far as demos go, the primary subjects are those demos that I can actually coerce people into doing. If people only volunteer to demo games, then that's what we'll demo. I'll do my best to keep the demos as varied as possible though. My personal thanks to all those people who signed up to volunteer to do demos at last month's meeting, I'll be getting in touch with you soon. In fact, Ed himself is doing a demo at this month's meeting. Way to go, Ed!

The next two questions I'll pass on to our 8-bit PD librarian, Sam Cory, for the definitive answers. I'll temporarily try to give them a shot in the meantime. I would say that as long as you don't duplicate the disks exactly, the individual programs contained on those disks are still public domain and may be copied. These distributors cannot become owners of a public domain program by putting them on a disk. They are basically selling the service of collecting and copying the programs for you, not selling the programs themselves. As for the catalog, we do have one, albeit I believe it is somewhat out of date due to problems that have been enumerated in the last couple of newsletters.

As for the last question, that one at least I can answer with some authority. Technically, no, you do not need an assembler/editor to program in machine language. Every time you do a POKE in BASIC, for instance, you are really programming in machine language. An assembler/editor simply makes the job of getting down and dirty with the machine a lot easier.

My advice is this: If you simply want to learn a little about machine language programming and don't want to invest fully in an assembler/editor, try the book, Machine Language for

Beginners by Compute! Books. It has a assembler program written in BASIC that anyone can run and learn a little about assembly with. If you really have your heart set on an assembler, I recommend MAC/65 from ICD. It is the best, fastest, and easiest assembler to use for the Atari and comes with a debugging program built in to the cartridge. If machine language type speed and techniques (Display List Interrupts etc.) are what you're after and you don't want to get too far from BASIC or Pascal, try Action! That's the option I use. I only pull out the MAC/65 when I want to write something I have to use with BASIC for someone else.

And a letter from our prolific author, Joe Hicswa:

Hi! Thanks for your explanation of TRAP 40000 at the December meeting. It was thorough.

Introduction of the GENLED program (JACG disk 127d) mentioned in my previous letter states: "GENLED will run on 400, 800 computers only.", and "GENLED.XL is the XL, XE version of the file.". I expected GENLED.XL to run on a 1200XL at my friend's house. It would not run.

The file was hard copied and examined on my 130XE at home. That's when TRAP 40000 was discovered. After REMing out TRAP 40000, the file booted up and ran on the 130XE. I assumed it would do the same on the 1200XL. It did not. The problem was some POKES in line 20090.

20090 POKE 675, NO:POKE 676,32:POKE 677,0:POKE 678,48:POKE 679,64

I inserted REM between 20090 and the first POKE. TRAP 40000 was reactivated. The program ran beautifully on my 130XE. Later it also worked on the 1200XL. I don't know what the POKES do in the program, but there is no apparent effect when they are voided.

Wanted to keep you abreast of what was done to make the program run in appreciation for your information.

Happy Holidays and New Year for you, your family and friends.

Friendly yours,
Joe Hicswa

REPLY: I would reccomend to Joe and everyone else, including those who want to learn machine language like Ed or fix up programs like Joe to get another excellent book from Compute!, Mapping the Atari. In Joe's case, it is soon easy to learn that those 5 POKES on Line 20090 set up the TAB stop columns on the screen. I presume this is to align the display in some manner. The thing is, I tried these POKES on both an 800 and a 130XE and they just do what they advertise (set up TAB Stops at columns 10, 27, 28, and 34). In short, although REMing them out seem to have fixed your problem, I can't see how they would have caused a problem in the first place.

And in general, while I applaud your exploratory efforts to fix the program (espically since they worked!), I do want to caution people when they add or delete lines that contain POKES that you do not know the purpose of. Many times you can fix one problem, only to cause two more to spring up someplace else. For instance, REMing out Line 20090 might cause the screen or printer display to work incorrectly sometime in your program. So, be cautious and aware, but keep exploring! That's how we all learn!

8 - BIT FEATURE

8 - BIT PD LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

by Sam Cory, 8-bit PD Librarian, JACG

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!! It is never too late to wish love. Yes, this months' DOM is another disk from another club. Again it covers labels and menues on the front and a lot of interesting

files on the rear. Enjoy even though I could not take the time to replace any duplication. Also, I did not have time to check any of the files. Sorry, Hope they all work.

Had a call from an old time member (1983) who has never been to a meeting - Felix Staffaroni - how is that for sticktuitivness? Lives in E. Stroudsburg, Pa. and teaches in BLAIRSTOWN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. Will wonders never cease, to have a JACG member so close. He called to offer help with our library. Also, to tell us Blairstown has 8 800s purchased in 1983 and still computing well. They had purchased some 800XLs but found them too fragile for the students so the teachers are using them. (probably the membrane keyboards- replacements are available at BEST Electronics in Ca.). Be assured I am going to support him and Blairstown school in every way I can. I am certain you all will approve.

Last month I mentioned Kris Holtegaard and his new excelent program - DATAGRAPH written in BASIC - will work with any DOS. His disks were delayed but perk up. Ol reliable Neil will give a demo next month and has an article in the next newsletter. There will be at the meeting 6 sets (2 disks of three sides). Since they are NOT PD or Shareware they will cost \$25 and will be available in the library for 6 months. I know this close to XMAS, money is short. But we need to support our programmers (Kris is the only real BASIC pgmr in existence, I know) or we will lose them as we already have lost thousands. Soon, at this rate, we will be holders of the modern DODO bird, and will deserve it. Same old stuff isn't.

ATARI is no longer listed in the top 100 electronic companies by Electronic Business. They had been for quite a few years due to their European sales. Also in Nov, 1990 issue of Research and Developement ATARI had a full page PORTFOLIO ad.

MAD Magazine was on TV Chnl 7 "LIVE with REGIS and KATHY LEE" Dec 11,

1990. Dick Bertolli, the MAD HATTER, showed and extolled, among other best XMAS presents, the merits of ATARI LYNX @ \$200.

Electronic Engineering Times of Dec 10, 1990 had ATARI announcing "its first desktop platform aimed at CAD/CAM applications: the TIO30 graphics workstations. From 2-26 megs. About \$3000. Call 1-408-745-2000.

US Weather Bureau has been calling the weather well during 1990. Three months ago they predicted we would have a warmer and drier time than normal in this area. They have done it again. Lets see - that puts us into April and I have saved enough money to pay the higher oil prices. Wonderful! Maybe we will be wearing shorts in May!

I am grateful to the new TEXTPRO for many features. One of the best I use often allows putting the last filename on the command line (in Spartados) by pressing the space bar. No typing or typing mistakes. You can chose to recall either the last D: or not with the filename. It sure gives me peace of mind and is quick.

Again HAPPY NEW YEAR from the old DODO bird himself. Sam Cory

GENERAL FEATURE

DECEMBER MEETING NOTES

by Joseph E. Hicswa, JACG

Saturday, December 8 was a typical December day. It was also the first meeting for our new JACG officers. The auditorium lobby was filled with (Christmas???) shoppers and flea marketeers -- four tables loaded with bargains. There was Bill Wynne, a policeman from Middletown, New York (140 miles away); his table loaded with hardware: monitor, graphic printer, drives, computer, etc. All was not sold so anyone interested should call Bob at 914-344-0797 or write: 42 Gardner Ave. Middletown, N.Y.

John Albert, 339 Meadowbrook Rd, Wycoff, N.J. (201-891-9483) also has for sale a complete 800 ATARI system including Indus & 810 drives, Interface, J-cat & Hayes 300/1200 modem, and many disks.

Some table bargains included SYNCALC for \$10, a RANA 1000 Drive, many manuals, books, word processing programs, and a 520ST with drive that made a member happy.

Among the shoppers was 9 years old Josh Denton of Livingston who has an ST at home and enjoys playing CHAD STRIKES BACK. Young Denton is in the 4th grade where they use ATARI computers. Josh, who came to the meeting with his dad, Mr. Robert (Bob) Denton, said his brother Marc is 11 and in the 9th grade. Then there was Spring Seip, aged 12 from New Providence who enjoys ATARI WRITER and PRINT SHOP on her ATARI 800. She was accompanied by her 10 year old sister Shaun and their cousin Kendall Karr, 11, also of New Providence. Shaun likes "ALL ATARI GAMES", especially QIX. Kendall's favorite is MINER 2049er.

Busy at the newsletter collating station were Gary Gorski, Mike Hochman, Jeff Stevens and Dan Bair of Rosell Park who has an upgraded 520 ST and uses VIP PROFESSIONAL spreadsheet for his home/personal finance records. I asked Mike Hochman and Gary Gorski about the Z-NET supplement missing from November Newsletter and learned Z-NET was not received in time for November meeting. It is shipped from California but did arrive for our December Newsletter. "Hopefully," I was told, "December Z-NET will arrive in time for our January Newsletter".

Gary Gorski had extra copies of our club newsletter so I accepted one for a potential member who has an ATARI system but was unaware of our club. Perhaps other similar ATARI users might appreciate a copy of our newsletter to learn about JERSEY ATARI COMPUTER GROUP.

Dave Arlington did a great, one-man job setting up demo equipment on stage. Unfortunately one piece malfunctioned so demos had to be shown on a small monitor. Nevertheless, the quality of demoed programs overcame this handicap. John Dean explained that a special switch box is needed. The one normally used was being repaired.

President Joseph Kennedy opened the meeting with our regular question & answer session. One questioner complained of getting ERROR 90 which is not included in his regular ERROR list. It was explained that some programs show ERROR codes in HEX instead of DECimal. The questioner was advised to convert HEX 90 to DECimal, also to re-read the software manual.

Another problem was UNARCing files from Single Density Disks to Double Density with two drives and SPARTADOS. Modem programs were discussed, namely: BOB TERM vs XPRESS. One member said a PD program would not run because it contained "...TRAP 40000". His computer does not have line 40000. He was told that TRAP 40000 is a legitimate statement. Programmers use TRAP 40000 to negate a TRAP command which was unused. For example, most programs have a TRAP statement to insure the MENU selection (letter or number) is made correctly. Without the TRAP being cancelled and an ERROR occurs later, the uncanceled TRAP would return to Main MENU. Thus, the reason for that member's program not running is not the TRAP 40000 statement. He'll just have to search further.

Dedicated Robert (Bob) Mulhearn, former Membership Chairman and Secretary was lauded and awarded, in absence, a plaque for his years of commitment to our JERSEY ATARI COMPUTER GROUP. He is known for his technical knowledge and readiness to explain and aid any member with a problem. (See President's message in November issue of Newsletter). Unfortunately Bob's job transfer and

assignment prevented attending our December meeting. Farewell Smiling Bob.

Editor David Arlington was elated with articles received but needs more for ensuing issues of our grand newsletter. As 8-BIT V.P., David needs 8-bit demos, tutorials. He passed out a sheet for members to sign and indicate what they would like to demo or see demo'd.

16 BIT V.P. Dave Noyes is in need of 16-bit news articles and demos. He talked about WORD-UP word processor. (See his article in December newsletter).

16-BIT Librarian John Dean told us that Sam Cory, 8-BIT librarian was operated upon for glaucoma and should be well enough to attend meetings starting March, 1991. John then described the 16-bit DOM. See December Newsletter. He also stressed that anyone finding a problem with any JACG Library disk should contact him. Name and address on back page of this issue.

The following new members were recorded:

Edward H. Wyatt	Ridgefield Park
Arthur Naysmith Jr.	Wayne
Ed Salvesen	Kearny

DEMOS:

DAVE ARLINGTON showed us 8-BIT DEGAS Picture Viewer. Imagine, multicolored, DEGAS pictures on an 8-BIT. It was like WOW! The program with others will be an 8-bit DOM. I can't wait.

16 BIT V.P. Dave Noyes showed us GOGO ST, K-TEXT and MEGA FORMAT. Outstanding programs for the ST.

Shree Vandenberg took us descriptively through HARLEKIN a versatile 16-BIT, WP & Desk Top program by Gert Grennim & Hasse Wehner. Shree is President of FUTURES (Small business Computers for less) in Plainfield, N.J.

The meeting closed with 8 and 16 bit doorprizes for all. Hope you're having a HAPPY ATARI NEW YEAR! See you in February. Bring a friend.

GENERAL FEATURE

ATARI AT COMDEX NOTES *by Joseph Wyks, JACG*

I'm sure most of you have heard your fill of COMDEX by now, but if you haven't, please read on. I was lucky enough to attend COMDEX this year - something I've wanted to do ever since reading an in-depth report on CompuServe several years ago when the ST was announced. That report and others like it prompted me to become an Atari stockholder, which I have yet to regret. While this year's Atari booth would not cause me to become a stockholder, it did confirm that the company is alive and kicking.

Atari had a prime location near the entrance of the brand new Sands exposition center as well as a prominent ad for the Portfolio and the new TT030 right in front of the rotunda of the Las Vegas Convention Center. Atari's booth, while not overcrowded, received more attention than nearby IBM compatible vendors. Some familiar faces and many more familiar names manned the booth. I can now honestly believe the quote attributed to Jack Tramiel that "Business is War." He sure looked the part of a general!

Portfolios were the predominant attraction, with approximately 20 stations set up to demonstrate various programs. RAM card drives which allow the Portfolio to share data with IBM and Apple computers were also shown. The new STe, Mega STe (with built-in hard drive), STACY, and TT030 were on display. I won't go into technical specifications for the new machines since that information is readily available elsewhere.

A TT030 was shown running Calamus

DTP on a 19" large screen. Output was to an industrial-size plotter. Every once in awhile the TT literally outran the program causing the machine to crash. Understand that the version of Calamus I saw running was most likely in the process of being upgraded to run on the TT. Very impressive.

Perhaps the highlight of my visit was talking to David Small and his associate Barb. Both were very pleasant and easy to talk to. I must have spent about 45 minutes with them, and I was impressed with their honesty. David was showing the new version (3.0) of his Spectre GCR Macintosh emulator on a TT030, next to one of the high end MACs. Needless to say in an Atari newsletter, the Atari was faster. Keep your eyes out for his 68030 accelerator board for the ST, which may even outpace the TT! These people *deserve* your support, and their Spectre cartridge is a fantastic addition to any ST. (That sounds like the topic for another article!)

My overall impression was that Atari has finally grown up. No more half-baked ideas out the front door - all honest, useful products that are available. You just have to know where to find them.

16 - BIT FEATURE

THE UPGRADE

A Parable by Mark Butler

This is the saga of the new version of SuperWizzbang Plus. Sit back and see if any of this sounds familiar.

John has been eagerly awaiting version 2 of SuperWizzbang Plus ever since he saw the large 2 page ads in all the magazines. Version 2 could do everything he could do now and included over 712 new features. It was a total package with a better spreadsheet, database, word processor, calendar, notepad, desktop publisher, phone dialer, etc. than ever before.

A few weeks after the ads ran he got a letter from the company telling him that there was a special offer for owners of version 1. He could upgrade to version 2 for a measly \$199. He mailed off a check and his old disk that same day. He never bothered to make a backup disk until his new version arrived, the ad said that they were already shipping advance copies to old customers.

After waiting 3-1/2 months John got his new disks. By now he was frantic, having been without for all this time. He tore open the package, read the quick install card which just said "Boot the installation disk" and did so.

Absolutely nothing happened. John decided to try the 298 page installation manual. It said that version 2 has been re-designed to take advantage of color monitors. Checking further he discovered that version 1 did not care what monitor you had but version 2 required a color monitor. John decided that he needed a color monitor anyway so he went out and purchased one.

Back at his 520ST, John booted the installation disk and watched the glorious color intro start up. He tells it he wants to install the software on his hard disk, and begins the disk swapping procedure. Why can't I use my second drive he wonders.

After 39 disk swaps, it informs him that it is ready to install his printer driver. It display a list of 137 printers and tells him to select his. That's strange, thinks John: Version 1 supported my old Slowpoke-100 printer but I don't see it on the list. Checking the manual again he cannot find anything to help, but it does say to display the READ.ME file for the latest update information.

Re-booting, John finds the READ.ME file on disk 18. It tells him that "Certain printers that were available in previous releases are no longer

supported. If your printer is unlisted, select one that is similar or use the GENERIC printer. Be warned that the GENERIC printer driver does not support 93% of available printer options."

Starting up the install procedure again, John is dismayed to see a "INSTALL FAILURE" error and then the system hang with 7 bombs. Back at the manual he finally spots a small sentence that tells him the installation procedure assumes that there is no old version on his disk. Re-booting and checking his hard disk, John deletes the partially installed SuperWizzbang Plus, and started it up again.

This time everything goes fine, John selects the Slowpoke-200 which he is sure must be compatible with his Slowpoke-100. After inserting disk 18 John sees the enlightening message "DISK FULL" and 13 bombs. Re-booting John discovers that although he had plenty of room on his hard disk before now he has only 6 bytes free. The manual informs him that although version 1 fit on a 360k disk, version 2 requires 2.5 megabytes of his hard disk. "Well it needed some cleaning up anyway" John thought as he removed some old NEO pictures. He also remembered to delete the partially installed folder before re-starting the install procedure.

This time the install finishes without a hitch. Excited now John clicks open the SUPWIZZ2 folder and activates SUPWIZZ2.PRG. Suddenly a dialog box comes up informing him that the system cannot read drive A. John is dumbfounded. Back to the manual: John discovers that although version 1 was not copy protected, version 2 has so many new features that it is copy protected. He must now insert the key disk in drive A whenever he wants to use SuperWizzbang Plus. Inserting the disk, John activates SUPWIZZ2.PRG, watches in amazement as his drive A light comes on and horrible snarking sounds issue forth. Finally the drive light goes out and he looks back at the

screen. "NOT ENOUGH MEMORY" and 12 bombs greet him.

"Huh?", the old version ran Ok on his 520ST. The manual clearly stated on page 85 that version 2 required 1 megabyte. "Well I always wanted 1 meg anyway" John thought. He took his 520ST to his friendly local user group and had it upgraded to 1 meg.

Back at the keyboard, John boots with increasing excitement. Although the install has been a bit rocky (and more expensive than he originally thought) he is sure that it will all go smoothly now. He starts it up, the drives whir and the screen displays 14 bombs. After paging through the install manual he comes upon a Xeroxed addendum tucked in the back. It informs him that SuperWizzbang Plus version 2 will not allow any desktop accessories. "AHA" thinks John, since version 2 will do everything my 5 desktop accessories do anyway I don't need them. He removes the 5 .ACC files from his hard disk and re-boots.

Next time, John actually tries to use it... To Be Continued....

8 - BIT FEATURE

MORE DD3 NEWS AND OTHER STUFF by Your Favorite Picture Junkie

Most of us take the JACG Newsletter for granted every month, it's there at the meeting, or if we miss the meeting it's in the mail a couple of months later. We read it, then file it away. Well, recently I've had it brought to my attention just how valuable those pages are. I was looking for a way to hook up my new IBM type computer to my 130XE. When I presented the question at the meeting last month, Dave Dvorin told me he had written a three part article on "Working on MS-DOS Files With Your Atari 8-bit".

Well, a frantic search ensued. I found the first and last installments right away, with the rest of the JACG

newsletters I had filed away, but could not find the most important one, the second article with the serial cable make up. It took me almost a week and a half before I came across it. It was buried on my work desk out in the garage, where I had put it almost a year ago when I was thinking about making a cable up.

Just two weeks ago I had occasion, again, to realize just how important the newsletter is. I received a letter from Bill Cooney, in the land down under. In it he says "...I was fortunate enough to get my grubby little hands on a copy of your club's November newsletter. I have to tell you that I was very impressed with the amount of 'original' content - as opposed to reprinted material from other sources. My congratulations to those writers."

Bill's main reason for writing was a subject which is a favorite of mine, Daisy-Dot III. He is a user of Daisy-Dot II and now wants to move up to DDIII. He also expressed an interest in David Richardson's Daisy-Dot III manual.... I called Dave last weekend, to see what the status of the new manual was, and it's ready. Dave's latest manual is now up to 47 pages.

Dave's manual now has over 100 fonts in it, a couple of his excellent articles (Exploring The Wild Frontier), which he has written for LACE (Lawrence Kansas Atari Computer Club), and many helpful hints and notes about using Daisy-Dot III. If you are interested in corresponding with Dave, his address is:

David Richardson
P.O. Box 746
Lawrence, Kansas 66044

By the time you are reading this, a copy of Dave's manual will be winging it's way to Australia and will also be on the JACG BBS for your downloading pleasure. If you are unable to download a copy, see one of the club officer's or myself and we will make sure you are

able to obtain one.

Neil Van Oost Jr., JACG

GENERAL FEATURE

STAR FLEET I PLAYING HINTS

by Ed Salvesen, JACG

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Although Ed offered this hint for 8-bit players, this game is also available for the ST and I have every reason to believe these tips work on the ST as well as the 8-bit. I'd be interested to hear from any readers who try this trick on the ST version of Star Fleet I.)

While reading the December newsletter, I saw a comment by David Noyes requesting 'Easter eggs' (game hints or 'cheats') that the membership may find interesting. Since I am one of the JACG's newest members, and since most of my experience has been with games. I am sharing this 'egg' which may not have been known.

The first one concerns the game Star Fleet I, a fine commercial game written in Action! by Interstel. This, to me, is the finest Star Trek clone on the market and is still commanding premium prices at retailers.

Each 'long' mission, the mission of choice on this game, should take a good hour or so if you are to come back victorious AND claim the Hero of Alliance Gold Star, the game's highest award. Now, the game offers this award with a mission rating of 125+ at the easier levels decreasing to 110+ at the toughest levels. After finding this 'Easter Egg', I literally more than doubled my average ratings at every level. Citing scores is meaningless, since anyone can change them using the built-in editor/manager function. Only by trying this yourself can you fully appreciate the difference.

The greatest increase in ratings occurs when you rescue a StarBase, while the greatest decrease occurs if

you fail to rescue a StarBase! So, here's how to provoke an attack at the StarBase of your choosing:

First, capture a Krellan ship using tractors and transporters. Drag it to the quadrant containing the StarBase. Now, release you captive ship and go dock at the base. (The captive ship should be visible on the screen before you release it.) While still docked, clear the quadrant of any other enemy ships so the status board reads 0 attackers. Now, pull in the Krellan ship, gaining credit for a delivered ship and reducing the status (artificially) below zero!

The programming can't recognize -1, so it recycles to the maximum (5) attackers! (This is like moving a clock hand backwards from 1... you get 12!) If you're not already docked with the base when this happens, now you won't be able to dock! Now, even though the status board shows 5 attackers, they do not appear on the viewscreen! They become enabled as soon as you leave the quadrant and, in one or two turns, they will attack that StarBase! Remember, as you rescue the Base, leave at least one Krellan for capture. Then dock (and replenish). Then, pull in the captured Krellan and start the sequence all over again. But, be careful not to allow that Base to become so weak that it cannot withstand another attack!

I usually keep two bases under potential attack simultaneously. That way, I warp back and forth almost constantly saving bases and gaining some some good kill/time ratios. This gets particularly tricky in later levels where there is only one StarBase. There are, of course, other tricks I pull based on this 'Easter Egg' but they fall under the category of strategy. I hope Star Fleet I players can make use of this tip to help increase their awards.

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JACGLSEA.203

is an **APPL**ication disk and includes **VCR PRG.APP**, a VCR organiser that will catalog, and print out, lists of all your tapes. **M_INV_32.APP** is a Database to list Albums, tapes, CD's etc. **LIMITD19.APP** will handle Rolex or Index cards, envelopes, etc. **LABLMAX15.APP** is an update of the Label-MAX program. **QLABEL.APP** will load & edit up to 10 labels at a time. **CASLABST.APP** is a Cassette Label Maker from Archie Software. **GEMLABEL.APP** is a monochrome only program that does all types of labels - with graphics. **JETLAB11.APP** was written for the HP Deskjet - 2 label sizes can be handled. **ENVEL_21.APP** is a full featured label maker that can handle almost any label configuration. **ST LABEL.APP** is a GEM label maker for mail or disks.

JACGLSEA.204

is a **TELE**communications disk. **ZMFLASH.APP** has Zmodem, the fastest file transfer protocol, while **EZCOMM2.APP** is a menu driven full feature Telecommunication program. **TURBOCTS.APP** Provides RTS/CTS protocol for the ST. **HAGTERM2.APP** is simple to use - it has a buffer and built in HELP features. **MINISCU1.APP** is a small terminal program in GFA but needs a transfer .ACC like the one on HAGTERM. **ZMDM.APP** has a Zmodem transfer capability that works with Interlink. **XYZ.APP** is a replacement for RZ.TTP. It will now resume after a NAK.

JACGLSEA.205

is another **TELE**communications disk. **IG211.APP** is an update of the Instant Graphic terminal program. **TINYTERM.APP** is PD Desk Accessory that works with XYZ.TTP. **MASTER.APP** has a list of files that are on the local (NJ) Greystone BBS. **UTERM.APP** includes Uniterm, version 2.0, a great Terminal program. **VANTERM.APP** is the excellent Vanterm 3.8, an update of JACG_LIB.145. **MGUN.ACC** works in all resolutions and lets you shoot bullet holes all over the monitor screen!

JACGLSEA.206

is a **UTIL**ity disk. **ACCESS.APP** is the first, and perhaps only, GEM window Command Line Interpreter - sort of a CLI.unix? **CALLFSEL.ACC** will call any file selector, even the Atari selector, which can be handy at times. **ARC105.APP** will Arc or Unarc complete disks, and put the files in a folder, if you want. **DUTILSHL.APP** provides all kinds of disk utilities from a shell format. **LGSEL16C.APP** is the Little Green Football File Selector 1.6c.

JACGLSEA.207

is a **UTIL**ity disk. **CALCLO.APP** contains a side by side window graphical analog clock and calendar. the calendar can be used to determine the number of days between given

dates. **PINHE17.APP** contains update 1.7 of the version on JACG_LIB.180. This really speeds up your bootup. **APP MERG.APP** merges any type of file, ASCII or binary, to any other file. **CLINIC.APP** checks for viruses when retrieving disk files. **DMPRESET.APP** is the preset program to work with **DESKMG33.APP** which is update 3.3 of JACG_LIB.178 (3.2) **FONTRX.APP** is an .ACC that changes screen fonts to ported 8 bit fonts, or Degas fonts. **GEMQST.APP** Use this in your AUTO folder after QuickST and enjoy! **NX_SETUP.APP** is a printer driver for 24 pin printer screen dumps. **DORUN-RUN.APP** sets up STWriter global parameters to your preference. **OMENU2.APP** is an update to JACG_LIB.147 Easy APPL execution. **QUERY.APP** is an .ACC companion for the program DataRetrieve. **VERSYS.APP** is a programmer's aid keep track of your backups as you modify your work.

JACGLSEA.208

is a **UTIL**ity disk. **DCOPY_38.APP** has some bugs fixed. It will now allow scrolling when T is called. **FASTEXTR.APP** Can be either a Desk .ACC or a .PRG. and can de-arc into folders. Fast! **CPANEL.APP** is an improved public domain substitute for the Atari Control Panel. It also includes a reset proof Ram disk. **CACHEV35.APP** updates the disk cache program found on JACG_LIB.147. It now allows TOS to format disks. **TEMPEL19.APP** is a Machine Language monitor & debugger. Used in your AUTO folder, it will show where the crash occurred, instead of bombs. **DCSHW11.APP** is now STE compatible. When a text file is double clicked and SHOW selected, the text can now be scrolled. **LHARC102.APP** This is Version 1.02, and has an improved user interface. **ANTIBOMB.APP** Replaces bombs with user friendly alerts. **CHECK.APP** Mono version, checks disk space, ram, etc. **CHECK1A.APP** is a Color version that checks disk space, ram, etc. **CLOCKSYNC.APP** Sets both internal clocks to same time. **SKIPPERF.APP** Set your printer to skip perforations with either an .ACC or .PRG.

JACGLSEA.209

is a **GAME** disk. **BLOODAXE.APP** is a fun, fast game in D&D tradition. **BLOCKADE.APP** is a low resolution Qix clone from Europe with a graphic background. **ECOLOGY.APP** is a low resolution and has Midi sound and great 3-D animation. **GOUP.APP** is a Monochrome "Loderunner" from Germany. **PATIENCE.APP** is solitaire in its various formats. Monochrome. Excellent graphics.

JACGLSEA.210

is a Desk Top **PuBL**ishing utilities disk. **PSCAPT10.APP** Lets Time Works Post Script save output to disk. **GEMART2.APP** has 10 images in .GEM format. **CV2IMG12.APP** Converts Seurat, Degas, etc. to .IMG format. **EZ GEM.APP** Convert CAD3D and UNITERM pics to .GEM format. **CVTPM.APP** Convert

Printmaster from/to IBM PM format. **WPLUSIMG.APP** Converts Seurat to Word-plus .IMG **GIFTOPS.APP** converts .GIF files to Post Script files. **MYG_DEMS.APP** Load & manipulate IMG P13 PC3 NEO TNY etc. files. **IMGART_1.APP** contains 9 images in .IMG format. **CLIPART.PC3** is 'ATARI' in many shapes & sizes. **GEMART_4.APP** contains 7 images in .GEM format.

JACGLSEA.211

is a **GAME** disk. **FORTRESS.APP** is a compiled STOS game that has 25 rooms, and will show status of the game as you find your way around. **GHOSTMIN.APP** is pretty tricky. (Hints are provided). You must go down in the mine and vaporize the spiders before your energy runs out. **NFL25.APP** This will help you get your National Football League predictions up to 80% right. How about that! **BLOBBRUN.APP** This is what "Loderunner" should've been! **VSQ.APP** First Tetris, then Valgus, now Valgus squared!

JACGLSEA.212

is an **UTIL**ity disk, filled with programs to help you use the Hewlett Packard Desk Jet printer. On this disk you will find: **AMERTY.APP** provides fonts in varying sizes. **COLUMNS.APP** prints text files (ASCII) on the Desk Jet, and matrix, printers in two column 'magazine style'. **COMPACT.APP** will give you set up your printer to use condensed type and 10 lines per inch and print out your hard disk directories. **DEG2HP.APP** will print out Degas file on either the Laser or DeskJet printers. **DJ_WWRTR.APP** has a configuration file for Word Writer and the HPDesk Jet. **DOWNC.APP** is a program to download soft fonts to the HP Desk Jet. **DOWNPA.APP** is a program, in Basic, to download soft fonts to the HP Desk Jet. **ENVELOPE2.APP** will give you either a .ACC or .PRG to print directly to envelopes with the Desk Jet. **EPSJET.APP** is a software Epson MX-80 emulator for the Desk Jet. **HP_5260.APP** will give you the means to address individual labelson 3 across by 10 deep Avery label sheets with the Desk Jet. **JETLABEL.APP** is another program to help you print labels across asheet. **KXP5260.APP** is like the HP_5260 except it is for the Panasonic Laser Printer **STW_HPDY.APP** will give you a printer driver to use with STWriter.

JACGLSEA.213

This is a **UTIL**ity Disk and includes the following files: **BIGCOLOR2.APP** This is an updated version by Jeffery K. Hughes, that will work with all systems. Now you can run "color only" software on your mono monitor. **DEFSEL.APP** is a Shareware Item Selector from the U.K. and is as good as U.I.S. DOCs are included. Please support Shareware authors! **FCOPY3.APP** FastCopy III by Martin Backschat. FastCopy can run as a program or an accessory and is one of the fastest disk or file copiers around. **FR_QUICK.APP** is a mouse

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accelerator from the U.K. When you move the mouse slowly, the cursor moves slowly. When you move it fast - fast cursor movement! **FASTGIF.APP** is a Shareware program by Bradford W. Mott. It supports Medium and Low resolution, and will convert GIF files to P11 files **FAST! FS_DJET.APP** This is a HP Deskjet Driver to use with Fleet Street desk top publishing program. **GEMART 3.APP** is a collection of art in the .GEM format **JET-SET.APP** is a Shareware program by LeRoy Valley, and allows you to set up parameters of the HP Desk Jet such LPI, Scale, Pitch, LQ, etc. **KALEN.APP** is a program to give you all you ever want to know about dates. When is Easter in any year, or Mothers Day- either U.K. or USA, any recognized Holiday you can think of. Excellent. **PRHP16.APP** PRHP is a text file printing utility for use with HP Deskjet and Deskjet+ printers. It allows printing in many various modes in portrait or landscape orientation. **PRORSARV.APP** by Chet Walters. Depending on what keys you press, the Print or SAVEr will either print the screen on the printer or save it to a disk. There are two versions, one for HPDJ owners and one for regular printer owners. Please read the instructions carefully for the one you want to use. **SLICKY 1.APP** is a SLide show Construction Set by Rupert Spencer that lets you use different fade and appear effects between slides. Low resolution Degas and NEO pics only. Super. **TLCPLA.APP** This program is very simple to use, it runs in either Medium or High resolution. The main screen shows all the available options, nothing will work until you select a sound file to load. The amount of RAM you have to use is shown as 'Sound RAM' at the bottom of the dialog box so if you select a sound file longer than this, the program won't allow you to load it. You can load almost anything into the program (not just digitized sound files). You can load any type of program but most sound pretty odd when played.

JACGLSEA.214

This is GAME disk, and includes the following: **AFL 47.APP** This is a BBS Axolotl Football League written for an EXPRESS BBS but the author Axolotl Tyrant feels that it should run well on other boards. Shareware. High & Medium Resolution. **HERO 1.APP** This is the Dungeon Construction Set (DCS) designed to create and manipulate dungeons for the HERO II game system. Virtually every aspect of the dungeon is under the control of the user, from the appearances of the images to the creature and item names and abilities as well as the story line and quests. Finished dungeon designs may be extracted as data files playable by the HERO II game player, and freely uploaded and transferred. Color. **RORKE.APP** is a game from the U.K. Rorke's Drift from Impressions is a simulation of the famous battle between 137 British soldiers and 4,000 Zulu warriors over a period of two days starting on January 22nd 1879. Remember the classic film, Zulu? In this game you are in charge of the British soldiers and it's up to you

to defeat the Zulus with the odds stacked at 40 to 1 against your men. Can you survive? It faithfully recreates the incredible encounter, a conflict full of bravery and devotion to duty, so much so that 11 Victoria Crosses were awarded. Low Resolution.

JACGLSEA.215

This is a GAME disk and includes: **BODYSHOP.APP** BODY SHOP is a program designed to help students learn Human Anatomy as required in most Elementary or Junior High School science courses. The names and locations of all the major bones and organs of the body are taught using both common everyday terms and the more technical medical terms. Low Resolution. **KV PARK.APP** For children, ages 2-6. Be a butterfly. Fly around a park, creating activity where you go. You will find children playing, trees, hot air balloons, and more. Low Resolution only. **OPUSM11.APP** OPUS No. 1 is a game where two remote controlled space glider have to find and destroy each other. The first glider is controlled by the player whereas the second one is controlled by the computer. For every hit you'll get one point to your personal point account. Before you start the game you are able to make bets with your already earned points. Monochrome only. **PILEUP 2.APP** The basic premise of the game is similar to TETRIS (tm). You must guide various blocks down the screen and try to fit them together as close as possible as they pile up. If you fit together a layer without leaving any spaces, then that layer will collapse. If you collapse enough layers, then you will advance to the next level.

JACGLIBD.216

This is a GAME disk. **STAR.APP** (Starblade) is a space opera set in the 30th Century in the vastness of the Orion galaxy. This program requires a colour monitor and a joystick in port 2. Titles are in French, but the graphics are so excellent you don't need to read the titles. **GL GALAD.APP** is imported from Germany, and it's totally written in English. It is a MONO only text adventure you'll be sure to enjoy. **NOVA.APP** is a brilliant shoot-'em-up arcade game that runs in low resolution colour. The instructions are simple: blast everything that moves, survive as long as possible and amass the greatest number of points you can. Use the joystick or the keyboard. **CINEMA.APP** is Shareware by Albert Baggetta. This is a simple animation for kids. Nothing too advanced here, just simple block drawing that comes alive, like an animated coloring book.

JACGLSEA.217

This is a LANGUAGE disk. **GDOSHELP.APP** is "Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about GDOS (and more), by Douglas N. Wheeler. The PRO_GEM folder includes **PRO_GEM1.APP** & **PRO_GEM2.APP** which comprise a series of articles titled "Professional Gem" written by Tim Oren.. **GEM-**

CLIB.APP, **PRO16SRC.APP** and **PRO17SRC.APP** include the C libraries and tutorial programs that accompany the articles. **METADUMP.APP** includes a short file that will translate the contents of a .GEM file into 'english'. **SHOW_P11.APP** will help you convert color images into monochrome - by Michael A. Long. **VECTHEFT.APP**, Copyright 1990 by John Eidsvoog and Charles Johnson, give the Programmer's Eleven Commandments for Coexistent Vector Stealing. **V_BIT.APP** by Craig W. Daymon, is the C source and compiled .PRG to allow the user, with GDOS and a GDOS printer driver present, to select and print an .IMG file, scaled to fit an 8"x10" area.

JACGLSEA.218

This is a UTILITY disk. **ALADDIN.APP** Aladdin is an automatic communications tool designed to provide you with the most efficient use of the features and services of the GENie information service. Aladdin can automate all the normal functions of accessing and drawing information from GENie and the various services within it. By handling most of the repetitive tasks within GENie, Aladdin can save you a considerable amount of time and money in the form of reduced access and online charges. **EDKAK 20.APP** Please refer to the file EDHAK_20.TXT for the full documentation for EdHak (and Diary). **EDHAKDOC.APP** This Self ExtrActing file includes the documentation for EDHAK_20. EdHak is a very versatile editor that runs as either a Desk Accessory (DA) or as a stand-alone PRG. Just change the extender from .ACC to .PRG and it runs as a normal program. EdHak started life as a VERY simple desk accessory text editor named 'Diary' since it was intended only to provide a way for people to jot notes to themselves while in the middle of other applications. Since then, based on input from many pleased and displeased users, plus some ideas I had about what an editor should do (namely be able to edit ANYthing including files of ANY size, disk sectors and RAM), many additional capabilities have been added.



DISK PRICES

The D.O.M. is \$3.00 to all members at the monthly meeting. All other disks are \$4.00. For Mail Order, add \$1.00 for each two disks. Send order to::

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Noise from Noyes - D. B. Noyes, JACG

On TECHNOLOGY

Isn't technology wonderful? We, the elite of ATARI owners, know of the power and utility of computers and computer related products. We remember (dimly) of the bygone BC (before computers) era when manual/mechanical calculations, pens and pencils, typewriters and paper, reigned supreme. How can one NOW possibly survive without the basic gifts of today's technology? Unthinkable, eh?

To put things into the Noyes perspective, allow me to relate my most recent wrangle with technology; and although not ATARI or computer related, it is a microcosmic example of the technologic morass into which society has become immersed.

Two days before Christmas I had started to bake cookies and fruitcake (a long-standing tradition in the Noyes household), and was into a second batch of cookies when I noticed that the gas oven (not electric) was not maintaining temperature, but was in fact getting cooler and cooler. A quick inspection indicated that there was no flame where flame should be. The electrically ignitable gas range top still worked fine, but the electric igniter which normally would "fire up" the oven was as cold as Jacob Marley's corpse.

I called the local repair service, only to find that the "best" for a visit was the day after Christmas; I thus ended up using a toaster oven (six cookies or one loaf at a time) and was able to complete the task. The serviceperson's visit confirmed my worst fears. The internal wiring (asbestos insulated wires) to the igniter, et. al., and perhaps the electronic thermostat were "all shot", a new range was the most sensible solution.

What's the point of this little anecdote? It should be obvious; as we become more and more technologically sophisticated, we rely more and more not only upon that technology, but also upon

the products of that technology, and with that reliance comes a not so insubstantial risk. A gas oven circa 1940 through 1970 will probably work into the next century, just turn on the gas, light it with kitchen matches (remember them?), and watch the temperature. As in my "little" experience, when the plug is pulled or a chip fails, we can find ourselves extremely vulnerable. Redundancy and back-up are now absolute necessities (the toaster oven and a microwave oven are providing that for me); and thusly also in the world of computers, in the world of ATARI. SAVE often, back up, and have redundancy in important systems...and SURVIVE!

On MEMBERSHIP

I got a call the other day from an ATARIAN having a problem with *Daisy Dot*. I told him that our former 8-bit Vice-President (Neil Van Oost, Jr.) was an expert in the *Daisy Dot* field and that he should give him a call. I told the gentleman that Neil's phone number could be found on the rear of JACG Newsletters prior to December, 1990. He told me that it wasn't on his Newsletter. It turned out that the newsletter he was something over a year old, he had none more recent, as he had not renewed his membership. I told him that I was sure that Neil would still be more than happy to assist him with any 8-bit ATARI questions that he might have; I also recommended that he renew his membership.

The point is...up until quite recently our membership has been declining, yet there was and IS a valid need for the JACG. However, the relationship, by necessity, must be a two-way street. Without dues-paying membership support, there will be no JACG to support member ATARIANS!

...til next month...

ST Vice-Presidential Ramblings

D. B. Noyes, JACG
Vice-President, ST

As I promised at the last meeting, I will review two recently released entertainment titles. They are: 1) *The Computer Edition of SCRABBLE* (registered trademark of Selchow & Righter Co., a subsidiary of Coleco Industries, Inc.), by Leisure Genius (registered trademark of Virgin Mastertronic, Ltd.) which I will refer to as "Scrabble" throughout the rest of this article, and 2) *The HOYLE official BOOK OF GAMES* (under license from Hoyle Products, a division of Brown & Bigelow, Inc.), by SIERRA (SIERRA ONLINE, INC.), which I will refer to as "Hoyle" throughout the rest of this article. Both are currently available in the \$30.00 price range (each, of course!). As is becoming more and more the case, both titles come on double-sided (3 1/2", of course) disks - if you haven't yet acquired such a drive, I would highly recommend that you do so, or you may soon find more and more software that you will be unable to access.

Scrabble follows accurately its traditional board game predecessor (without the wooden tiles getting lost, or spilled all over the place! One may play up to three other players, either computer, real, or a combination thereof. The game utilizes a built-in dictionary of between 12,500 to 20,000 words (docs don't say exactly how many for the ST version), and the computer WILL challenge words not in the dictionary (however, if you tell the computer that the challenged word is legitimate...it will believe

you). Unfortunately the dictionary is fixed and uneditable - which is what I feel is one of the MAJOR shortcomings of Scrabble - there is (in these days of spell checkers) no reason that I can see not to have this capability in Scrabble.

Tile movement is easily effected by use of the mouse, you are given a chance (after seeing what the effect will be, score-wise, to either confirm or abort a particular word configuration. As in the board game there are double and triple letter and word bonuses, blank tiles, and the capability to "trade in" tiles for others (with the loss of a turn, of course). With the computer opponent(s), one may adjust their level of competency (I can get a winning average of almost 100 percent with the computer at "1" (its' weakest level)). A clock feature is provided if you like to add stress to your game.

I initially assumed that tiles were selected via some randoming algorithm, however I have been started out with the letters "W E A K C I M" on many occasions, and the computer seems to get letters to spell out "IOTA" quite often at the start. I don't quite understand this, but it may be another shortcoming of the ST version of Scrabble.

Although Scrabble is not copy protected (ALWAYS make a back-up where possible), it does come on an auto-boot disk; and

there are no instructions relative to installing the ST version on a hard disk (other machine versions are provided with that capability) and I don't believe that it can be installed on same. This is more of an inconvenience than a shortcoming, as the disk loads relatively quickly.

Scrabble is challenging, and with adjustable "intelligence" levels for the computer, or the ability to play human opponents, should be "just right" for just about anyone. If you like the original BOARD game, you shouldn't be BORED by the computer version!

Hoyle is an incredible slooow loading piece of software. Even when put into a ramdisk it seems to take forever to load...in fact, it seems to take about the same time to load regardless of whether one loads from floppy, hard, or RAM disks. At least it is not copy-protected, and you will be able to back it up (always a smart thing to do, and it WILL run off of a hard disk. Once loaded, you have nine different playing card designs to choose from,; after which you can select from six different card games: Crazy Eights, Old Maid, Hearts, Gin Rummy, Cribbage, and Klondike (solitaire). My personal favorites are Cribbage and Klondike...and are the reason that I purchased Hoyle. I should mention, a neat feature (with all the card/game selection possibilities) is the ability to save a set up. This feature allows one to save card design, game, deal/game/delay/animation speeds, and volume (including sound on/off). Thus you can load (still slooowly) right into your favorite game.

With the exception of Klondike (of course there is no

opponent in solitaire!) one can choose from 18 computer opponents. These vary in skill levels and can (your choice) converse with you on-screen during the game. I generally shut this feature off to speed things up, as speed is not one of Hoyle's strong points.

To be honest, as Klondike and Cribbage are my personal favorites (as card games), they are all I basically use of Hoyle. Hoyle is polished, the cards look "real", and the choices are many. However, there are several PD versions of solitaire and cribbage which are entirely adequate (and much faster). If one were contemplating the purchase of Hoyle for only Klondike and Cribbage, I would suggest PD versions instead...however, if one wanted even one of the other games available in Hoyle, I would then recommend Hoyle...the variety of available games is unequalled.

Just a note or two on the PD world. I will be giving to John Dean (at the January 1991 meeting) two (yes, 2) full double-sided disks with the latest from COMPUSERVE and GENIE. Included among the many titles will be "FLOORMAT" a full-featured formatter and virus protector which, among its many features, is the ability to tell you whether your disk was REALLY successfully formatted, or not. Another file is a version of Yahtzee (or whatever it is called in PD land), and two labelling programs (one for disks and the other for cassettes). A good printer configurer is also included.



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COMDEX REPORT!**

December/January 1991 Vol. III No. 1

ATARI INTRODUCES NEW MEGA/STE

by John Nagy

Atari's major new product announcement for COMDEX was the totally redesigned MEGA/STe. To be available very early in 1991, it has already passed FCC testing (in early December). The Mega/STe is identical in appearance to the Atari TT030, but in ST grey rather than off-white. The base configuration is not completely settled, but may be 2 meg RAM, 40 meg internal hard drive, TOS 2.2 or higher with the Atari NewDesk enhanced GEM and Extensible Control Panel. The Mega/STe also has a 16 Mhz 68000 CPU, which is switchable (with and without static RAM cache, or vanilla 8 Mhz for compatibility with problem software). Pricing is still in flux, but promises are being made that the base Mega/STe with mono monitor retail for less than a similarly outfitted Mac Classic... and be twice as fast. It is possible that street price for a monitorless Mega/STe will be near \$1,000.

The Mega/STe is, above all else, an STe: no TT resolutions, no new colors or video outputs, etc. The internal floppy is 720K. Ports include the full complement of the 1040STe line MINUS the analog joystick ports.

Additional ports are: LAN port - Appletalk compatible, same as the TT; TWO modem ports in the new smaller connector configuration that is becoming standard; VME BUS CARD PORT - same as the TT and accessible from the rear of the machine. The Mega/STe does NOT offer the "real SCSI" external hard drive port that the TT has, and the Atari DMA port is now called "ACSI" as it is on the TT. A 68881 math coprocessor socket is also offered internally.

The power switch for the Mega/STe is placed in a very awkward place, in the center of the back panel right below where you are certain to place your monitor. Fortunately, the RESET button is within easy reach, on the left side of the machine, just behind the LAN, MIDI, and CART ports.

The new TT-look wider base of the Mega/

STe takes more desk area, but the internal hard drive earns its footprint. A minor problem will be the fact that the existing line of Atari hard drives share the "old" Mega look, which just does NOT integrate at all with the new case.

The Mega/STe keyboard is the same as the TT030 as well, featuring a better feel than the "old" Mega keyboard, principally due to a better, smaller keytop style. The function keys are now much more distinguishable due to better spacing, clear markings, and fingerstops at the left edge of each button.

The two best features of the new Mega/STe are the 16Mhz speed and the new TOS/Extensible Control Panel. Speed is switchable via the new control panel to 8 Mhz or 16 Mhz with or without the static RAM cache. Performance figures are very good, as fast as any ST with third-party 16 Mhz accelerators I tested and, as expected, roughly twice the computing speed as a "normal" ST. The new desktop is subtle but addictive. User configurable hot keys for most every function, plus applications installed on function keys, plus new icons, plus live desk icons for programs, plus selectable window, border, and desktop colors... you get the idea.

Atari's new "Extensible Control Panel" offers hooks for a variety of environmental additives, including the normal CP functions plus GDOS control, mouse acceleration, and more things than have yet to be imagined. The look and feel of the new panel is all new, and it includes graphic accents that make it more fun to use without being too cute. The smiling face with headphones that turns one way or the other depending on the stereo sound balance setting is one example. The new "FONT SCALING MODULE" GDOS might be included on the hard drive of every new Mega/STe and TT sold.

The Mega/STe is a treat: fast, nicely featured, and probably priced very well. It is a much more attractive package for a serious user than the older

MEGA or the 1040 style machines, and will be actually much cheaper than adding an accelerator and hard drive to an STe. It should be a hot mover in the Atari line... once it begins to be available in early 1991.



Atari MEGA/STE, SC1435 Color Monitor, SLM605 Laser Printer

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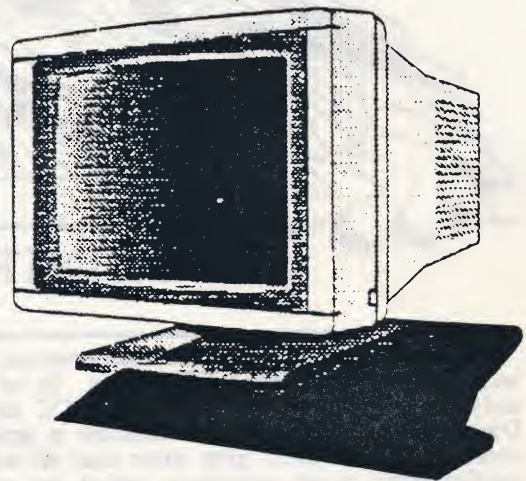
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Z*Net Newswire...



⇒ Z*NET Monthly is taking a well deserved break for January, producing this December/January issue in order to catch up with an ever-increasing delay in production. Problems in scheduling actual production, plus staff relocations and legal matters have caused the Z*NET issues to be late since October. This break will allow clubs to catch up with the current issue of Z*NET or to take a Christmastime break of their own. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all... from Z*NET!

⇒ Atari Corporation reported a third-quarter (ending Sept. 30, 1990) net income of barely over three million dollars on sales of \$89 million, compared to a loss of \$5 million on sales of \$81 million for the same period last year. This year's income would have been over a \$3 million loss except for an offset of over \$6 million gain from Atari repurchasing debentures at a favorable term. Net income per share was \$.05.

⇒ Meanwhile, Commodore announced earnings of \$7 million, or \$.22 per share on sales of \$200 million for their first fiscal quarter ended Sept. 30, 1990. This compares with a loss of \$6.5 million on sales of \$165 million a year ago. Net sales for the quarter increased by 21 percent, attributable to a 50 percent growth in unit sales of the Amiga product line and to favorable exchange rates of major European currencies.

⇒ Atari has hired MIKE FULTON, programmer and sales rep from NEOCEPT, to assist in developer support. Mike started in early December, and word is that Atari is considering buying NEOCEPT outright, and

making their graphic word processor, WORD UP, an Atari brand title.

⇒ The long awaited Atari TT machine will be shipped to Canadian Authorized dealers following the unveiling at the Toronto Computer Show. Due to a limited supply dealers will be shipped one sample unit per store for demonstration and evaluation purposes. Units for sale will become available about the end of November for a suggested retail of \$3995.00 (Cdn). USA release is still pending acceptance by the FCC (see COMDEX details in this issue).

⇒ Atari Canada announced it has begun a major advertising campaign for the Portfolio computer. Advertising is slated for most major newspapers and magazines across the country as well as a new pricing structure designed to make the palm-top affordable to almost all users.

⇒ In late October, Atari UK mounted a public computer exhibition on a train, visiting key cities around the UK and attracted around 20,000 visitors. The whistle stop tour was billed as a "festival of computing expertise" and was a free visitor attraction sponsored by Atari. There were special displays built into six carriages on the train which visited Bristol, Leeds, Manchester, Newcastle, Glasgow and Birmingham, areas seldom served by major computer shows.

⇒ TITAN DESIGNS of the UK has just introduced its REFLEX GRAPHIC CARD, offering increased screen resolutions and able to drive large-screen monitors from the ST. Resolution is 1,024 x 1,024 on A3 or A4 monitors, or 1,024 x 800 on standard

Atari SM124 monochrome monitors. It also features a ZOOM which increases resolution to 2,048 x 1,536, 16 times the normal screen area. The card fits MEGA machines with adapters in the near future for other models. Price is 230 pounds... with no known US importer online as yet.

⇒ Atari Germany announced it has obtained the contract for one of the biggest educational computer orders ever placed by the Soviet Union, succeeding against strong Asian computer competition. The Youth Computer Centre of Eriwan is a free educational facility where young Soviet students are trained for their future computer related professions. The initial order is for \$65,000 worth of ST systems, some Atari PC systems, and peripherals.

⇒ The word is out in Germany that the last 'regular' German Mega STs are in the dealers shelves right now. Although most of the public is not (yet) aware of the new Mega STE, that was displayed at Comdex, the prices for the old models are falling drastically. No official release dates for the Mega STE is available yet, BUT ATARI GERMANY is holding a big press conference on December 12th in Munich.

⇒ Lake County Atari Computer Enthusiasts (LCACE) presented the Chicago AtariFest '90 on Sunday, November 11 for a successful attendance of about 750 people in the suburb of Gurnee. Users came expecting bargains, and they were not disappointed. Nor were local and traveling vendors, who reported excellent sales and a great time. Attending vendors and developers included: A.P.E.

Newsletter; CodeHead Software; CompuServe; D.A. Brumleve; DataQue Software; GENIE; ICD; M-S Designs; Reeve Software; SKWare One; Unicorn Publications; WizWorks!

⇒ A longtime Atari development and import house, Michigan's MICHTRON has been purchased by a software group from Newark, Delaware. The new president, James A. Dorsman, has taken over full operation of all technical support, development, and publishing. Gordon Monnier, former president of Michtron, will be consulting with the firm. The new Michtron management has promised an "aggressive and exciting new product launch" as well as continued support and sales of Michtron's existing product line. Michtron says it intends to continue distribution and service for the overseas publishers it has worked with in the past, and to seek out new products from home as well as abroad. However, the HIGHSOFT line was being shown at COMDEX by GOLDLEAF (the WORDFLAIR people), and TALON has claimed to be distributing PC-SPEED and AT-SPEED. Further, MIRRORSOFT of the UK has announced that FLEETSTREET PUBLISHER is being pulled off the market due to poor sales... all this perhaps leaving the Michtron stable somewhat vacant of hot products. MICHTRON, INC., 3201 Drummond Plaza Newark, DE 19711, phone 1-302-454-7946.

⇒ MICRODEAL, one of Michtron's main import lines, has announced REPLAY 8, replacing Replay

Continued...



...Z*Net Newswire



4 as an amateur musician's sound sampler and editor. It will feature some of the enhancements of Replay Professional. Availability is not yet known.

⇒ Downscaling has hit Atari magazines overseas as well as in the USA. ST WORLD (UK) has dropped its publishing schedule back to QUARTERLY releases.

⇒ An Atari emulator for the Amiga computer continues to draw comment and fire as it develops. Purporting to be "public domain", the file "ATARI1" (now in general BBS distribution worldwide) includes illegal copies of TOS and GEM internally. Reports are that the thing actually works, at speeds up to half of that of an Atari, although desk accessories do not work, and many, even most common programs do not operate. Screen appearance is also said to be very poor. Atari's stance continues to be that this file is a violation of Atari's copyrights, and that distribution will not be permitted.

⇒ Users are closing in on just what triggers one of the most obscure (and innocuous) bugs in the new TOS 1.6. Becoming known as the SPC bug (for SHOW, PRINT, CANCEL), this one causes an executable program to occasionally be offered for viewing as text rather than loading when double clicked. While this is seldom more than the briefest of annoyances, with the advent of "live icons" upon us, the dropping out of "load" mode when pulling a document to an application can be troublesome. A recent discussion on GENie turned up the fact that the bug happens with much predictability if the entire pathname (without drive specifier) totals exactly 16

characters in length. This may help Atari find the actual cause, but can also help users avoid it. Says one user: "I just got a call from a client who... was having problems with Microsoft Write. I immediately asked him if the filename was WRITE.PRG and if it wasn't perhaps in a folder named \WRITE\ (totalling 16 characters in the path). Indeed it was, and I asked him to rename the folder to \MSWRITE\ He did, ran MSW, and it worked perfectly."

⇒ After a five year-long effort the Software Protection Association was pleased to see the passage of a bill that makes software rental (other than non-profit library loans) programs illegal. One hour and a half before Congress recessed to start campaigning for reelection, the so-called "software rental bill" was finally passed. The bill makes it illegal for companies to rent software in a manner that allows users to copy and keep the program then return the original disks and documentation for re-rental.

⇒ Verbatim introduced the second generation of rewritable optical disks. The new 128MB capacity 3.5 inch rewritable optical disk is the most recent in a series of product introductions that include Verbatim 4MB floppy diskettes and 5.25 inch rewritable optical disks. Optical disks are much more durable than hard disks. This durability means that stored data is expected to last at least 10 years, and perhaps as long as 50 years.

STE GAME COMPATIBILITY

UPDATE: The following is a list of games that don't work

on the Atari STe (TOS 1.6) as of Summer/Fall 90. The list is amended for that originally published in the British magazine ST Action. Several games they said didn't work actually do work, such as the Falcon Mission Disk (I tried it - no problems). They might have used a 520STe, which is only available in Europe. I used a 1040STe. TOS 1.4/1.6 might use more RAM, so things that barely fit in an old 520 might not fit in a 520STe. Most games that don't work with 1.6 also don't work with 1.4; the big changes happened with 1.4.

Confirmed not to work: 3D Pool; Beyond the Ice

Palace; Captain Blood; Carrier Command; Conflict in Europe; Dark Side; Defender of the Crown; F16 Combat Pilot; Ghouls 'n' Ghosts; Heroes of the Lance; Hound of Shadow; Karate Kid 2; Kick Off; License to Kill; Menace; Microprose Soccer; Mr. Heli; New Zealand Story; Ninja Warriors; Operation Wolf; Overlander; Paperboy; Populous (original edition); Rick Dangerous; Star Wars; Time Scanner; Times of Lore; Total Eclipse; TV Sports Football; Waterloo; Winter Games; Weird Dreams (From Ken Newman)

Z*NET CROSSNET CONFERENCE

The following Bulletin Board Systems carry the Z-Net Crossnet and the Z-Net weekly magazine. If you are interested in joining in this informative conference you may call any of the boards listed or ask your local FoReM Sysop to join "Z-Net". Conference code is "20448" and lead node is #593.

Node	BBS Name	Phone Number	Location
5	Mile High BBS	303-431-1404	Denver, CO, USA
97	Big Foot	206-726-9739	Seattle, WA, USA
133	Hologram h.c.	201-727-1914	Old Bridge, NJ, USA
153	Temporal Fixation	609-423-4865	Pausboro, NJ, USA
168	C.C.B.S.	609-451-7475	Bridgeton, NJ, USA
204	Full Moon BBS	508-752-1348	Worcester, MA, USA
304	Twilight Zone	407-831-1613	Longwood, FL, USA
322	ACEY BBS	509-966-8555	Yakima, WA, USA
401	HyperSpace III	404-452-7488	Atlanta, GA, USA
423	Runes of Thuviel	303-972-8566	Littleton, CO, USA
429	MASATEK	213-518-9524	Torrance, CA, USA
437	STinger BBS	805-834-9405	Bakersfield, CA, USA
440	Realm of Chaos	602-789-9426	Phoenix, AZ, USA
441	Bolder Room BBS	313-562-1142	Detroit, MI, USA
448	Crash ST BBS	604-299-5111	Burnaby, BC, Canada
467	Sherwood Forest	718-522-0768	New York, NY, USA
489	STeal Your Face	201-920-7981	Brick, NJ, USA
500	BATTLEZONE	301-969-0621	Glen Burnie, MD, USA
505	Atari West BBS	604-272-5888	Vancouver, BC, Canada
523	Leftover Hippies	416-466-8931	Toronto, ON, Canada
532	Bill's BBS	403-461-7546	Edmonton, AB, Canada
534	Huse of Horror!	415-531-1576	Oakland, CA, USA
538	The Dragon's Lair	803-788-7806	Columbia, SC, USA
542	Yakima Atari ST	509-965-2345	Yakima, WA, USA
546	Bear Swamp BBS	513-644-0714	Marysville, OH, USA
554	ISLAND EXPRESS	604-287-7247	Campbell River BC, CAN
556	Thieves Guild	301-894-8516	Suitland, MD, USA
574	Asylum	505-897-4306	Albuquerque, NM, USA
593	Z*Net Online	908-968-8148	Middlesex, NJ, USA
596	Super 68	206-859-9644	Kent, WA, USA

Call the Z*Net BBS - 201-968-8148

ATARI's NEW SCALABLE GDOS:

Techs Tell Tips

Condensed from messages on GEnie telecommunications service.

From K.BAD [Ken Badertscher at Atari]:

- FSM (Font Scaling Module) GDOS supports characters of any size, rotated at any angle, with any aspect ratio, skewed at any slant.

- FSM GDOS is compatible with GDOS Release 1.1. It works just fine with Microsoft Write, Word Flair, Easy Draw, and other existing applications which use GDOS.

- Because FSM GDOS can scale characters to any size, outline fonts don't require separate font files for different sizes of screen and printer fonts. Each font style requires an average of roughly 50K of on-disk data in 2 files for all devices in all point sizes.

- Not only can you still use your bitmapped fonts with FSM GDOS, those fonts work even better with it. It uses a font cache so that you can install as many fonts as you like in your ASSIGNSYS, as long as there's enough room in the cache for the largest font. FSM GDOS will move fonts in and out of the cache as they are needed.

- There is one important thing that FSM GDOS does NOT do. It does NOT slow down your system! The way that GDOS does its stuff has been streamlined. The CodeHead "Zoombox" benchmark shows that FSM is now only slightly slower than G+PLUS, and considerably faster than GDOS Release 1.1. So not only does FSM GDOS give you more, it gives it to you faster.

- Speaking of speed, character generation from outline fonts is also fast. It can pretty much keep up with my typing on an ST, and I clock in at around 80 wpm. On a TT, FSM GDOS can generate characters considerably faster than I can type. I can't say the same for ATM under Spectre...

- FSM GDOS will come with a couple of utilities: an accessory/program/CPX which allows you to specify various operating parameters, and an application program that will take full advantage of FSM's font power, letting you create and print simple single page posters/flyers with rotated, arbitrarily sized text and imported graphics.

Availability? Best answer I can give is Real Soon Now.

From TOWNS [John Townsend at Atari]:

FSMGDOS has a font cache option which makes the fonts get MUCH faster as they are used. I am talking about on the screen.

As for point sizes it works like this: There is a file called EXTENDSYS that contains all of the information about your scalable fonts. You specify specific point sizes in this file that will be recognized in your GDOS applications.

In addition to this method there is a new GDOS call that will allow you to get an arbitrary point size. If the GDOS application is aware of this call (most of the popular application should be by the time FSM GDOS ships!) then you can select any point size you want from 1 to 999 points.

FSM GDOS doesn't support Ultrascript ST fonts. I have no idea if they will support them in the future or not. See, the FSM module is from Imagen themselves and it supports only the IBM style Imagen fonts.

NORTH-CENTRAL REGION EDUCATIONAL LABORATORY'S TECH EXPO by Mike Brown

Recently, a very large educational "Tech Expo" was sponsored by the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, The Urban Education Network, The Office of Educational Research and Improvement (US Department of Education), Chicago Public Schools, and Illinois Institute of Technology.

This show and conference was attended by representatives of the 13 largest urban school districts in the Midwest along with the State Departments of Education for the states of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin. Doesn't this sound like a crowd that should be exposed to "Power without the price"? I took this opportunity to expose these school administrators to Atari.

My ticket into this exclusive gathering of educators and school system policy makers was my volunteer work with a Chicago Public Schools funded project to develop a "...conference conduit for users of all ages and background with any type of computer to share ideas. (the system) will erase the boundaries between schools and the greater community and provide support for classroom teachers...". If you guessed that this sounds like a multi-line BBS system, you win the star prize! Our BBS system currently has eight concurrent lines (with multi-channel CHAT capability) on a UNIX minicomputer provided by Unisys. The system (which has just celebrated it's first birthday) is called the EIES (Electronic Information Exchange System) of the Chicago Public Schools. Give us a try at (312) 890-8512 1200/2400 and (312) 890-7828 9600. Visitors welcome!

NCREL asked me if I'd be available the opening day of the show to staff a booth with other technical volunteers, I offered (sneakily) to work Saturday if I could use equipment and software that I was already familiar with. LCACE guiding light, Dwight (LJ) Johnson volunteered his new STacy for use at the show, this would be the hot show setup in a world of dull MS-DOS and Apple systems.

The gleaming new STacy was the star of the EIES booth- I drew a large number of comments from attendees about the STacy, and made some contacts with educators who use 8-bit Atari systems (most notably with LOGO) in classrooms.

At the show, I was surprised by the large outlay that IBM and Apple Computer made in equipment, staff, and hospitality. Zenith, Tandy and Pioneer America had more modest (but interesting) booths. Advanced Voice Technologies, Inc., Computer Curriculum Corporation, The ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education, Ed Tech, Encyclopedia Britannica, and TI-IN Network each had "one table" booths swarming with interested educators. Over 60 different sessions were presented during the 3-day conference. These sessions were held by exhibitors, software vendors, as well as educators themselves.

It was a very revealing experience shmoozing with educators and administrators, soft pedaling the Atari Advantage. One of the more frightening revelations of the conference, was the strangle hold that Apple Computer has on the US educational market, and the mind set of the educators. I constantly heard educators referring to computer labs as "Apple Labs". This seemed to make as much sense as calling Driver's Ed, "Chevrolet Training" or Home Economics, "Kraft Class". Lets all work to change this!

For more information on future Tech Expos, or general information on High-Tech, High-Touch and High-Teach resources for your local schools, please contact NCREL at 295 Emroy Avenue, Elmhurst, IL 60126 (708) 941-7677.

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